



2023-2024  
Student / Parent / Guardian  
7-12 Handbook

Menahga Public School District 821  
216 Aspen Avenue SE  
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Menahga, Minnesota 56464  
218-564-4141  
[www.menahga.k12.mn.us](http://www.menahga.k12.mn.us)

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**MISSION STATEMENT**

*District Vision:*

The Menahga School District exists to engage all learners on a lifelong path to success.

*District Mission:*

The mission of the Menahga School District is to build strong partnerships with stakeholders to ensure all learners succeed.

This handbook and its contents were approved by the Menahga School Board of Education at its September 2024 meeting. This handbook may be changed or amended at any time during the school year. Changes will be posted in the office of the principal. If you have any questions about a provision, contact the principal. Students at Menahga Public School will have access to the school handbook online at [www.menahga.k12.mn.us](http://www.menahga.k12.mn.us) and will receive a handbook when they begin attending school each year. )Students do not need to sign a receipt).

**Administration**

Superintendent	Jay Kjos	ext.1403	jkjos@menahga.k12.mn.us
7-12 Principal	Michelle Koch	ext.1301	mkoch@menahga.k12.mn.us
K-6 Principal	Lisa Parrish	ext.1102	lparrish @menahga.k12.mn.us
Assistant Principal	John Hedstrom	ext 1404	hedstrom@menahga.k12.mn.us
Activities Director	Michael Weerts	ext.1201	mweerts@menahga.k12.mn.us

**Board of Education**

Chair	Andrea Haverinen	218-564-5480	ahaverinen@menahga.k12.mn.us
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Treasurer	Julia Kicker	218-564-5556	juliakicker@menahga.k12.mn.us
Member	Helen Lehto	612-964-5880	hlehto@menahga.k12.mn.us
Member	David Treinen	218-255-0706	dtreinen@menahga.k12.mn.us

## PART I – INFORMATION

### Accident Insurance

The district does not carry insurance on students on an individual basis. Parents/guardians have the opportunity to purchase an individual insurance policy at group rates. This insurance is strictly voluntary. Information will be sent home to you on the first week of school.

### Arrival and Dismissal Hours

Hours for School District Buildings and Facilities School building hours are 8:00 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. Students must be supervised while in the building. Students should not be in the building prior to 7:30 a.m. or after 3:30 p.m., unless they are under the direct supervision of a coach, advisor, or teacher. Students causing issues outside of building hours may be served a trespass notice, which will restrict their ability to be on school grounds outside of school hours.

### Background Check Procedures

In compliance with Minnesota Statute 123B.03, Subd.1 (e) we are required to notify parents and/or guardians at the beginning of each school year of our hiring authority's policy requiring a criminal history background check on employees and other individuals who provide services to the school. Parents/Guardians that volunteer on field trips or in the classroom, must have a background check on file.

### Backpacks and/or Bags and Coats

\*Students are to leave backpacks, bags and coats in their locker during the school day..

### Bicycles

Students may ride bikes to school; however, they are not allowed to ride the bike on the school grounds during the school day. The school will not be responsible for their security and recommend that they be parked in the bike racks and locked.

### Body Sprays/Colognes

Because of allergies and sensitivities, body sprays/colognes/perfume or similar items should be applied in locker rooms or outside the school buildings. If used improperly, the item will be confiscated.

### Calendar

The school calendar is adopted annually by the school board. A copy of the school calendar can be found on the school district's website at: [www.menahga.k12.mn.us](http://www.menahga.k12.mn.us)

### Class Assignments

Students are scheduled in the spring each school year for the following school year. New students are scheduled in August or as soon as they enroll in the district. Teacher requests are

not a part of the scheduling process. Students are scheduled based on registration and course offerings.

#### Closed Campus Policy / Open Noon Period Privileges

Once a student enters onto school property, they may not leave school grounds without permission from a principal or an out-of-the-building pass. Students are to remain in the designated areas during lunch. Students may not be permitted to leave the school grounds or go into the parking areas during lunchtime. Lunchroom supervisors can give permission for students to leave the lunchroom area.

\*Seniors in good standing academically and behaviorally (principal's discretion) are permitted to leave for lunch.

- Seniors who have met a 3.0 grade point average or principal's discretion. The beginning of the school year grade point average will be determined by a student's spring cumulative GPA. 2<sup>nd</sup> Semester will be determined by fall GPA.
- Not received an Out of School Suspension at any time during the current semester.
- Not more than 3 daily-unexcused absences per semester or principal's discretion

Students must have a signed parent permission slip for privileges to begin. Students are to sign out before leaving the building and leave through the high school office doors. When returning, students are to sign in to the high school office laptop. Failure to follow these regulations will result in the loss of privileges. Privileges can be revoked at any time.

#### Complaints

If you feel there is a problem or concern related to your child's educational welfare the Board of Education requests that you follow the protocol below:

1. First, contact the person directly involved.
2. If you are unable to resolve the problem by contacting the person, please contact the appropriate principal or supervisor.
3. If you feel the problem still exists, you should meet with the superintendent of schools.
4. If not resolved after a meeting with the superintendent, you may request a meeting with the appropriate committee of the Board of Education.
5. In the event that you feel there is still a basis for a problem, you are invited to address your concerns to the full Board of Education for final resolution.

Written complaints must be filed within ten working days from the date of the incident. Please contact the district office for more information on the district's complaint of services policy and to obtain a complaint of services form.

#### Drills – Fire, Lockdown and Severe Weather

Drills occur several times throughout the school year. Each classroom is assigned a specific location to report for fire and severe weather drills. Your teacher will explain your location. Whenever an alarm is sounded, students should move to designated areas as quickly and quietly as possible. All drills should be taken seriously, so that students know how to respond in case of an actual event.

### Eighteen-Year-Old Students

The age of majority for most purposes in Minnesota is 18 years of age. All students, regardless of age, are governed by the rules for students provided in school district policy. The policies that Menahga High School operates under will be equally applied to all students regardless of age. M.S.A. 120.06 states, "Notwithstanding the provisions of any law to the contrary, the conduct of all students under 21 years of age attending public secondary school shall be governed by a single set of reasonable rules and regulations promulgated by the local Board of Education." Students 18 years of age or older, regardless of where they are living, will still require parental permission if a student is under the legal guardianship of the parent.

### Equal Access to School Facilities

The overall financial resources of the Menahga Public School District 821 do not allow it to locate the wrestling practice room anywhere but the basement of its facility. Therefore, to be compliant with ADA Title II and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the district will adopt Policy 521.1 Accessibility. A student with a disability who qualifies under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act will not be excluded from any school program, services, or activities at Menahga Public School District 821 due to an inaccessible classroom or basement. Programs, services, or activities will be relocated to rooms that are accessible on the main floor of the school building in order to accommodate a qualifying person with a disability. Please make written request to the contact person to make these arrangements as follows: High School Principal, PO Box 160, Menahga, MN 56464 Phone: 218-564-4141 ext

### Fees

Materials that are part of the basic educational program are provided with state, federal, and local funds at no charge to a student. Students are expected to provide their own pencils, paper, erasers, and notebooks. Students may be required to pay certain other fees or deposits, including (not an inclusive list):

- Cost for materials for a class project that exceeds minimum requirements and is kept by the student.
- Security deposits for the return of materials, supplies, or equipment.
- Field trips considered supplementary to the district's educational program.
- Admission fees or costs to attend or participate in optional extracurricular activities and programs.



- Voluntarily purchased student health and accident insurance.
- Use of musical instruments owned or rented by the school district.
- A school district-sponsored driver or motorcycle education training course.
- Transportation to and from school for students living within two miles of school.
- Transportation of students to and from optional extracurricular activities or post-secondary instruction conducted at locations other than school.

Students will be charged for textbooks, workbooks, and library books that are lost or destroyed. The school district may waive a required fee or deposit if the student and parent/guardian are unable to pay. For more information, contact the High School Principal.

### Food

Energy drinks are not recommended for consumption by anyone under the age of 18. Energy drinks will not be permitted on the school grounds at any time. This includes all school and athletic buses. No pop or soda is allowed on the school grounds during the regular school day unless pre-approved by the principal. Students may not eat or drink in the classrooms, library, or halls during the school day (8:15 a.m.-3:16 p.m.) except for specially permitted occasions. Students may have bottled water in class.

\*Food and Beverages are up to the discretion of the teacher and their classroom.

### Foreign Exchange Students

Menahga High School welcomes qualified exchange students to enroll in our district. The qualified student:

- Must be in grade 10 (or higher) or equivalent.
- Must be 16 years old.
- Must be part of a certified exchange program with J-1 sanctioning by the State Department.
- Menahga will accept a maximum of three exchange students per school year.

### Fundraising

All organizations need written approval from the principal, prior to their sale. This is to prevent overlapping sales, duplication, and recognition of the worthiness of the fundraiser. Forms may be obtained in the office. A copy of fundraisers approved will be provided to the Superintendent.

### Graduation Ceremony

Student participation in the graduation ceremony is a privilege, not a right. Students who have completed all the requirements for graduation are allowed to participate in graduation

exercises, unless participation is denied for appropriate reasons, which may include discipline. In order to participate in graduation commencement, students must wear the gown, mortarboard, honor cord, tassel, and stoll chosen by the graduation committee. The graduation committee will consist of senior class members, senior class advisors and the high school principal. Graduation exercises are under the control and direction of the High School Principal. It is the student's responsibility to track their progress towards completing the graduation requirements. Questions regarding the status of a student's progress should be addressed with the appropriate school counselor.

#### Graduating with Honors

A student having compiled a scholastic average of 3.60 or higher during grades 9 through 12 will be designated an honor student. A student must have attended Menahga High School facility grades 9-12 at some time during their high school career to be included as a Senior Class Honor student. The students designated as honor students will receive recognition in the area newspapers and on the Commencement Program. Honor status will be calculated after 1<sup>st</sup> semester final grades have been submitted. The senior graduation committee will consider honor students as commencement speakers. All seniors have the option to participate on the committee.

#### Interviews of Students by Outside Agencies

Generally, students may not be interviewed during the school day by persons other than a student's parents/guardians or school district officials, employees, and/or agents, except as provided by law and/or school policy. Requests from law enforcement officers and those other than a student's parents/guardians, school district officials, employees and/or agents to interview students shall be made through the principal's office. Upon receiving a request, it shall be the responsibility of the principal to determine whether the request will be granted. Prior to granting a request, the principal shall attempt to contact the student's parents/guardians to inform them of the request, except where otherwise prohibited by law. (School Board Policy 519L: Interviews of Students by Outside Agencies)

#### Library and Media Center

Media Center materials are available for student use during the school day and are available for checkout, with the exception of reference materials and some audiovisual materials. Students with overdue materials are not allowed to check out additional materials.

#### Lunch

All 9-12th grade students are scheduled for a 30-minute lunch period. 7th and 8th grade students will have a 40 minute block with 20 minutes of lunch and 20 minutes of recess. Students must eat in the cafeteria. Students are expected to bus their own dishes and keep the lunchroom neat and orderly. Students are not to share their meal account numbers. Food services include breakfast and hot lunch. The board approves the prices set for school breakfast, lunch and the price of milk. Lactose reduced milk will be provided to any student upon the written request by the parent/guardian.

It is important that parents/guardians sign up for free or reduced meals before school starts or at any time their income or household size changes. Those qualifying not only help our lunch program, but help fund other programs. Applications are available from the office. Please call the office if you would like assistance in completing the form. Applications do not carry over from year to year.

"In accordance with federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability." To file a complaint, write USDA, Director, Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 or (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TTY). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

#### Messages to Students

Students may not be interrupted during school hours by outside calls and messages except in the case of an emergency. If it is necessary to reach your child, dial 564-4141 extension 3.

The office will relay your message. Parents wishing to contact a classroom teacher should be prepared to leave a message requesting the teacher to contact them. Except during preparation time, teachers are not available to come to the telephone during the school day.

#### Money, Valuables and Personal Property

The school is not responsible for valuables which get lost, stolen, or damaged at school or on the bus.

#### Nondiscrimination

The school district is committed to inclusive education and providing an equal educational opportunity for all students. The school district does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, parental status, status with regard to public assistance, disability, sexual orientation, or age in its programs and activities.

#### Notice of Violent Behavior by Students

The school district will give notice to teachers and other appropriate school district staff before students with a history of violent behavior are placed in their classrooms. Prior to giving this

notice, district officials will inform the student's parent or guardian that the notice will be given. The student's parents/guardians have the right to review and challenge their child's records, including the data documenting the history of violent behavior.

#### Novelty Items

There is no reason to bring any article to school that does not pertain to a school activity. These items distract from the education of others. Any article of this nature such as squirt guns, cap guns, balloons, toys, CD players, etc. will be taken by the teacher and kept in the office. It will be returned only to a parent and should not be taken to school again. Laser light pens, when not used in an instructional capacity, will be confiscated and not returned because of their potential for injuring eyes.

#### Parent and Teacher Conferences

Two conferences will be scheduled each year. Check the school calendar for dates and times. You may contact teachers at any time throughout the year with questions or concerns or to schedule an individual time to meet.

#### Pledge of Allegiance

Students will be asked to recite the pledge of allegiance to the flag of the United States of America everyday during the start of 2nd period excluding late starts and E-Learning days. Anyone who does not wish to participate in reciting the pledge of allegiance for any personal reasons may elect not to do so. Students and school personnel must respect another person's right to make that choice.

#### School / Co-curricular / Extracurricular Activities

The school district provides opportunities for students to pursue special interests that contribute to their physical, mental, and emotional health; however, instruction is the school district's priority. Students who participate in school-sponsored and/or affiliated activities are expected to responsibly represent the school and community, their participation is a privilege and not a right. All rules pertaining to student conduct and student discipline apply to school activities. All spectators at school-sponsored activities are expected to behave appropriately. Students and employees may be subject to discipline and parents/guardians and other spectators may be subject to sanctions for inappropriate, illegal, or unsportsmanlike behavior at these activities or events. The Menahga School District is a member of the Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL). Students who participate in MSHSL activities must also abide by the MSHSL rules. The district will enforce all MSHSL rules during the school year and in the summer where applicable. Employees who conduct MSHSL activities will cover applicable rules, penalties, and opportunities with students and parents/guardians prior to the start of an

activity. For more information about the MSHSL rules and student eligibility requirements, contact the Activities Director (A.D.).

<b>Offerings by Categories</b>		
<b>Category I</b>		
<i>UNC Cross Country B/ G</i>	<i>Basketball Boys/Girls</i>	<i>Baseball</i>
<i>UNC Football</i>	<i>UNC Wrestling</i>	<i>Softball</i>
<i>Volleyball</i>	<i>UNC Speech</i>	<i>UNC Track Boys/Girls</i>
<i>UNC Cheerleading</i>	<i>PR Hockey Boys/Girls</i>	<i>UNC Golf Boys/Girls</i>
	<i>PR Gymnastics</i>	
<b>Category II</b>		
<i>Band</i>	<i>One Act</i>	<i>Robotics</i>
<i>Choir</i>	<i>Visual Arts</i>	
<b>Category III</b>		
<i>FCCLA</i>	<i>Knowledge Bowl</i>	<i>FFA</i>
<i>Clay Target</i>	<i>Three Act Play</i>	<i>BPA</i>

*United North Central (UNC) Cooped with Sebeka, Park Rapids Area (PR) Cooped with Park Rapids*

Other school-sponsored activities including but not limited to public performances in music, including marching band, parades, color guard events, pep band, band and choir concerts); school plays, National Honor Society banquets and awards programs; homecoming royalty and other homecoming activities; Student Council, Prom and all school sponsored dances are under the authority of the Menahga School District. Any consequences will be determined by the H.S Principal or designee.

### **MSHSL ATHLETIC POLICIES**

#### **I. SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE:**

**RULE:** Also, the Minnesota High School League (MSHSL) believes that all individuals should be treated with respect and dignity. Students should be able to participate in League sponsored activities in an environment that is free from sexual harassment and sexual violence. It shall be a violation of this policy for a student to harass a person through conduct or communication that is determined to be sexual harassment of sexual violence as defined by this policy.

#### **MSHSL VIOLATIONS BY MENAHGA ATHLETES**

Any student/athlete who violates the MSHSL substance policy/agreement during an athletic season (season is defined by the 1<sup>st</sup> day of practice until the elimination of that individual and/or team in the playoffs) will follow the following Menahga School adopted policy:

**Academic:**

1. In order to participate in an extracurricular practice or event or competition, the participant must be in attendance the entire day of school on the day of the practice or event or competition. (In the case of a weekend event, participants must be in attendance on the last day of the school week.) Exceptions would include an advanced notice call or note for dental/doctor appointments, funerals, or unique situations as determined by the A.D., H.S Principal or designee. Only the A.D. H.S.Principal or designee can approve absences the day of an extracurricular event.

2. Unexcused tardies/absences during the first period and periods following noon hours are considered as not being in attendance all day.

**Mood Altering Chemical / Tobacco/Vaping:**

See School Board Policy 419

First Violation

2 weeks or 2 events – whichever is greater including the following requirements:

- a. Complete alcohol/drug counseling with the school counselor
- b. Complete report on drug use
- c. Public apology to team and coach

Second Violation

3 weeks or 6 games – whichever is greater including the following requirements:

- a. Complete alcohol/drug counseling with a counselor
- b. Complete report on drug use
- c. Public apology to team and coach

Third Violation

4 weeks or 12 events whichever is greater including the following requirements:

- a. Complete alcohol/drug counseling with a counselor
- b. Complete report on drug use
- c. Public apology to team and coach

**CATEGORY I ACTIVITIES:** MSHSL sponsored activities in which a member school has a schedule of interscholastic contests, exclusive of League sponsored tournaments: 1) Athletic Activities 2) Fine Arts Activities - Debate and Speech activities including One-Act Play – when a school schedules a season of interscholastic contests.

**FIRST VIOLATION-CATEGORY I:**

**Penalty:** After confirmation of the first violation, the student shall lose eligibility for the next 2 events or 2 weeks of a season in which the student is a participant, whichever is greater. No exception is permitted for a student who becomes a participant in a treatment program.

Before being readmitted to activities following suspension for the first violation, the student must meet with the school counselor to receive information about the effects of mood altering chemicals.

**SECOND VIOLATION-CATEGORY I:**

**Penalty:** After confirmation of the second violation, the student shall lose eligibility for the next 6 events or 3 weeks, whichever is greater in which the student is a participant. No exception is permitted for a student who becomes a participant in a treatment program.

Before being readmitted to activities following suspension for the second violation, the student must show evidence in writing that she/he has sought and received counseling from a community agency or professional individual such as a drug counselor, medical doctor, psychiatrist or psychologist.

#### **THIRD AND SUBSEQUENT VIOLATIONS-CATEGORY I:**

**Penalty:** After confirmation of the third or subsequent violations, the student shall lose eligibility for the next twelve (12) consecutive interscholastic events or 4 weeks, whichever is greater in which the student is a participant.

If after the third or subsequent violation, the student on his/her own volition becomes a participant in a chemical dependency program or treatment program, the student may be certified for reinstatement in activities after a minimum period of six weeks. Such certification must be issued by the director or counselor or chemical treatment center.

#### **AND**

Before being readmitted to activities following suspension for the third violation, the student must show evidence in writing that she/he has sought and received counseling from a community agency or professional individual such as a drug counselor, medical doctor, psychiatrist or psychologist.

**CATEGORY II ACTIVITIES:** MSHSL sponsored activities in which a member school does not have a schedule of interscholastic contests, exclusive of League-sponsored tournaments including: 1) Speech activities including One Act Play when a school schedules no interscholastic contests and participates only in the League-sponsored tournament series. 2) Music Activities and 3) Visual Arts Activities. (Band, Choir, Robotics)

#### **FIRST VIOLATION-CATEGORY II:**

**Penalty:** After confirmation of the first violation, the student shall lose eligibility for two (2) weeks, or one (1) public or League event, whichever is greater, not to exceed one season (or year) for that activity.

Before being readmitted to activities following suspension for the first violation, the student must meet with the school counselor, or team for assessment and receive information about the effects of mood altering chemicals.

#### **SECOND VIOLATION-CATEGORY II:**

**Penalty:** After confirmation of the second violation, the student shall lose eligibility for four (4) weeks, or three (3) public or League events, whichever is greater, not to exceed one season (or year) for that activity.

Before being readmitted to activities following suspension for the second violation, the student must show evidence in writing that she/he has sought and received counseling from a community agency or professional individual such as a drug counselor, medical doctor, psychiatrist or psychologist.

**THIRD AND SUBSEQUENT VIOLATIONS-CATEGORY II:**

Penalty: After confirmation of the third or subsequent violations, the student shall lose eligibility for the next eighteen (18) weeks, or six (6) public or League events, whichever is greater, not to exceed two seasons (or years) or an activity.

If after the third or subsequent violation, the student on his/her own volition becomes a participant in a chemical dependency program or treatment program, the student may be certified for reinstatement in activities after a minimum period of six weeks. Such certification must be issued by the director or counselor or chemical treatment center.

Before being readmitted to activities following suspension for the third violation, the student must show evidence in writing that she/he has sought and received counseling from a community agency or professional individual such as a drug counselor, medical doctor, psychiatrist or psychologist.

**CATEGORY III ACTIVITIES-**Activities that are not league sponsored but are school sponsored and/or affiliated. BPA, Clay Target, FCCLA, FFA, Knowledge Bowl and Three Act Play.

**FIRST VIOLATION-CATEGORY III EVENTS:**

Penalty: After confirmation of the first violation, the student shall lose eligibility for two (2) weeks, or one (1) public event or competition, whichever is greater, not to exceed one season (or year) for that activity.

Before being readmitted to activities following suspension for the first violation, the student must meet with the school counselor, or team for assessment and receive information about the effects of mood altering chemicals.

**SECOND VIOLATION-CATEGORY III EVENTS:**

Penalty: After confirmation of the second violation, the student shall lose eligibility for four (4) weeks, or three (3) public events or competition, whichever is greater, not to exceed one season (or year) for that activity.

Before being readmitted to activities following suspension for the second violation, the student must show evidence in writing that she/he has sought and received counseling from a community agency or professional individual such as a drug counselor, medical doctor, psychiatrist or psychologist.

If a student is involved in Category I, II and III activities, the student must meet consequences of all three categories. Once the student meets the consequences in a specific category, they will be allowed to participate in that category only.

A student cannot elect to participate in an activity as a means to shorten the time he/she misses as a result of a violation. If a sport season has started and the student has not



registered for the sport, they cannot then go out for the sport in an attempt to shorten the penalty for another sport.

A student shall be disqualified from all activities for an additional nine weeks beyond the student's original period of ineligibility when the student denies violation of the rule, is allowed to participate and then is subsequently found guilty of the violation. If a student participates in an activity while they are ineligible, the length of the penalty shall begin anew the next day.

Penalties listed above are consequences for breaking MSHSL rules in season as well as out of season violations. Violations will carry into the activity participant's next season (Examples: A football violation would carry into wrestling or basketball) if the penalty had not been fully served during the season the violation occurred. Violations that occur out of the season will serve the same penalty as in season violations.

1. At any time during the calendar year, a student shall not, regardless of the quantity:
  - A. use or consume, have in possession a beverage containing alcohol;
  - B. use or consume, have in possession tobacco; or,
  - C. use or consume, have in possession, buy, sell or give away any other controlled substance or drug paraphernalia.

D. use or consume, have in possession, buy, sell or give away products containing or products used to deliver nicotine, tobacco products and other chemicals.

"Tobacco products" means: any product containing, made, or derived from tobacco that is intended for human consumption, whether chewed, smoked, absorbed, dissolved, inhaled, snorted, sniffed, or ingested by any other means, or any component, part or accessory of a tobacco product.

E. use or consume, have in possession, buy, sell or give away any substance or product where the intent of such use of the substance or product is to induce intoxication, excitement, or stupefaction of the central nervous system, except under the direction and supervision of a medical doctor. Such substances or products shall include, but are not limited to, synthetic drugs, gasoline, glue, aerosol devices, bath salts, and any substances addressed by Minnesota or Federal Law.

## 2. Penalties for Category I Activities

Definition - Category I Activities: Those League-sponsored activities in which a member school has a schedule of interscholastic contests, exclusive of League-sponsored tournaments.

- Athletic Activities
- Fine Arts Activities 1) Debate 2) Speech Activities including One Act Play - when a school schedules a season of interscholastic contests.

### A. First Violation Penalty

The student shall lose eligibility for the next two consecutive interscholastic contests or two weeks, 14 calendar days, whichever is greater, of a season in which the student is a participant.

## **B. Second Violation Penalty**

The student shall lose eligibility for the next six consecutive interscholastic contests or three weeks, 21 calendar days, whichever is greater, in which the student is a participant.

## **C. Third or Subsequent Violation Penalty**

1) The student shall lose eligibility for the next 12 consecutive interscholastic contests or four weeks, 28 calendar days, whichever is greater, in which the student is a participant.

2) A student who chooses to become a participant in a treatment program may become eligible for participation after a minimum period of six weeks after entering treatment if all of the following conditions are met:

- a) The student is assessed as chemically dependent,
- b) enters treatment voluntarily, and
- c) the director of the treatment center certifies that the student has successfully completed the treatment program.
- d) The treatment option cannot be used for the first or second violation.

Successful completion of a chemical dependency treatment program will satisfy only the most recent violation. Any other violations for which the penalty has not been satisfied must still be served in full.

## **D. Applying the Penalty**

1) Penalties shall be progressive beginning with the student's first violation and continuing throughout the student's high school career. Penalties shall be served consecutively.

2) Violation Confirmation Definition: The violation shall be confirmed when the administrator responsible for the athletics/activities program has informed the student that the student has violated a bylaw and is now under the penalty. The notification shall be verbal and also in writing.

### **3) Counting Weeks:**

a) The weeks shall begin on the date that the violation is confirmed by the school administrator and extend for the required number of calendar days.

b) For the purpose of this bylaw, a week is seven calendar days. The week starts the date the violation is confirmed and the student/student's parents or guardians are notified.

c) At the beginning of the season, practice and conditioning weeks are counted.

d) The student must participate in and complete the entire season in which the penalty has been applied for the penalty to count. As examples: a student cannot begin participation in a program at the start of the season, serve the penalty and then quit after the suspension has been served; nor can a student join a program after the season has begun, and serve the penalty.

- 4) A student who is under penalty for a violation of a League bylaw may not join a second sport in the same season in order to fulfill a penalty.
- 5) Practices, jamborees, inter-school scrimmages and previews are not interscholastic contests and may not be counted, however, the student is eligible to participate.
- 6) A student who participates in both Category I and Category II activities shall serve the penalty prescribed for that violation in both Category I and Category II activities in which the student participates.
- 7) Denial Disqualification: A student shall be disqualified from all interscholastic athletics for nine additional weeks beyond the student's original period of ineligibility when the student denies violation of the rule, is allowed to participate and then is subsequently found guilty of the violation.

### 3. Penalties for Category II Activities

Definition - Category II Activities: Those League-sponsored activities in which a member school does not have a schedule of interscholastic contests, exclusive of League-sponsored tournaments.

#### Fine Arts Activities

1) Speech activities including One Act Play when a school schedules no interscholastic contests and participates only in the League-sponsored tournament series.

2) Music Activities.

3) Visual Arts Activities.

Each member school shall develop penalties which it will apply to the participants in these activities. A copy of the member school's policy shall be filed in the principal's office.

#### Academic Eligibility Procedures

Students are responsible for class work in all classes. An Ineligibility List is published every week. If a student is on the ineligibility list, he/she is ineligible to participate in any extracurricular activities and will not be allowed to participate until the coach receives a signed statement from the classroom instructor stating that the student is once again in good standing. The MHS/UNC coaching staff is responsible for keeping updated on their participants' progress and ensuring that an academically ineligible participant does NOT participate. If a student fails one or more courses once the grades are posted at the end of each high school semester, he or she will lose eligibility for the next 2 events/contests in category 1 and 1 event/contest in category 2 or 3 per failed course. Any performances that occur during this time will be lost. Students are expected to attend all practices during this time period.

#### Activity Eligibility

In order to participate in Menahga High School's co-curricular and extracurricular activities, students must meet the following guidelines:

- Present a current physical (athletes only);
- Be under 20 years of age;
- Must meet Minnesota High School League Eligibility Guidelines;
- Carry the required number of credits for graduation;
- Be in regular attendance, having enrolled at least two weeks before being in a game;
- Must be in class a full day to participate in any co-curricular activity (practice or event);
- Students and parents/guardians sign eligibility agreements.

### School Closing Procedures

When school is dismissed early for inclement weather or other emergency reasons, all extra-curricular activities will be canceled. All students are to go home. When school is called off in the morning and conditions improve, the administration may approve practice, or team participation in local, subsection or section activities. Students will not be penalized for missing practice due to weather conditions or other emergency closings. The Menahga School District is linked to the Infinite Campus Instant Alert System. If you are signed up, this system will also alert you by an automated phone message to any school closing due to inclement weather.

The radio/TV stations listed below will also announce information concerning Menahga Schools: WCCO (Cable Channel 4); KSAX (Cable Channel 5); KARE 11 (Cable Channel 11); WDAY (Cable Channel 12); FOX 9 KMSP (Cable Channel 18); WCCO (830 AM); KPRM (870 AM); KWAD (920 AM); KJJK (1020 AM); KBRF (1250 AM); KMSP (1420 AM); KXKK (92.5 FM); KSKK (94.7 FM); KJJK 96.5 FM); KDKK (97.5 FM); KPRW (99.5 FM); KZCR (Z-103.3 FM); KKWS (105.9 FM)

Parents or guardians have the right to decide if their child should attend school in inclement weather. No penalties are assessed by keeping children home; however they will still have to make up the work they missed on that particular day. We ask that you still call in their absence by 8:30 am.

### School Dances

All events must be approved by the adviser and the principal and must be properly chaperoned. School activities during the school week must end by 10:00 p.m. or earlier. No activities may be held without proper supervision. Dances will be closed door. Once a person has entered, he/she may not leave and reenter.

### Dance Visitors

Dances at Menahga High School are school-age dances. Dance visitors are at the discretion of the building principal. Visitors that have graduated must be only one school year removed from

graduation, and under the age of 21. Students of Menahga are responsible for their guest being aware of and abiding with the school rules and policies.

### Prom

Menahga High School prom is a junior and senior dance. A junior or senior may invite students in grades 9-10 if they meet the dance visitor guidelines.

### Searches

In the interest of student safety and to ensure that schools are drug free, district authorities may conduct searches. Students violate school policy when they carry contraband on their person or in their personal possessions or store contraband in their desks, lockers, or vehicles parked on school property. "Contraband" means any unauthorized item, the possession of which is prohibited by school district policy and/or law. If a search yields contraband, school officials will seize the item(s) and, where appropriate, give the item(s) to legal officials for ultimate disposition. Students found to be in violation of this policy are subject to discipline in accordance with the school district's "Student Discipline" policy, which may include suspension, exclusion, expulsion, and, when appropriate, the student may be referred to legal officials.

### Lockers and Personal Possessions Within a Locker

According to state law, school lockers are the property of the school district. At no time does the school district relinquish its exclusive control of lockers provided for the convenience of students. Inspection of the interior of lockers may be conducted by school officials for any reason at any time, without notice, without student consent, and without a search warrant. Students' personal possessions within a school locker may be searched only when school officials have a reasonable suspicion that the search will uncover evidence of a violation of law or school rules. As soon as practicable after the search of a student's personal possessions, the school officials will provide notice of the search to students whose lockers were searched, unless disclosure would impede an ongoing investigation by police or school officials.

### Personal Possessions and Student's Person

The personal possessions of a student and/or a student's person may be searched when school officials have a reasonable suspicion that the search will uncover a violation of law or school rules. The search will be reasonable in its scope and intrusiveness.

### Searches by Canines

The school district contracts with Interquest Detection Canines of Northern Minnesota to perform searches on campus randomly throughout the school year. Handlers and canines will search parking lots, lockers, classrooms, and other district property. Canines are trained to find alcohol, firearms and ammunition, prescription and over-the-counter medication, and illegal drugs.

### Infinite Campus

The Infinite Campus program allows you, your parent, or your guardian access to your current academic progress, attendance history, and general information via computer.

Please recognize that this system *is not* designed to be instantaneous. It may take some time for teachers to evaluate, grade, enter grades in the electronic grade book, and update the information system from the teacher's grades books.

The information is designed to be an approximation, and to allow you to monitor student progress. Please contact the HS Office to obtain the form to apply for this option.

### Parking in Non-designated Areas and Careless Driving

\*If a student fails to park in a designated area, their parking privilege would be revoked.. The same process will be followed for a student who is driving or parking in a careless manner.

### Patrols and Inspections

School officials may conduct routine patrols of student parking lots and other school district locations and routine inspections of the exteriors of the motor vehicles of students. Such patrols and inspections may be conducted without notice, without student consent, and without a search warrant.

### Search of the Interior of a Student's Motor Vehicle

The interior of a student's motor vehicle in a school district location, including the glove and trunk compartments, may be searched when school officials have a reasonable suspicion that the search will uncover a violation of law and/or school policy or rule. The search will be reasonable in its scope and intrusiveness. Such searches may be conducted without notice, without consent, and without a search warrant. A student will be subject to withdrawal of parking privileges and to discipline if the student refuses to open a locked motor vehicle or its compartments under the student's control upon the request of a school official.

### Student Publications and Materials

The policy of the school district is to protect students' free speech rights while, at the same time, preserving the district's obligation to provide a learning environment that is free of disruption. All school publications are under the supervision of the building principal and/or sponsor. Non School-sponsored publications may not be distributed without prior approval.

### Distribution of Non School-Sponsored Materials on School Premises

The school district recognizes that students and employees have the right to express themselves on school property. This protection includes distributing nonschool-sponsored material, subject to school district regulations and procedures.

### School-Sponsored Student Publications

The school district may exercise editorial control over the style and content of student expression in school-sponsored publications and activities. Faculty advisors shall supervise student writers to ensure compliance with the law and school district policies. Students producing official school publications and participating in school activities will be under the supervision of a faculty advisor and the school principal. "Official school publications" means school newspapers, yearbooks, or material produced in communications, journalism, or other writing classes as part of the curriculum. Expression in an official school publication or school-sponsored activity is prohibited when the material:

- Is obscene to minors;
- Is libelous or slanderous;
- Advertises or promotes any product or service not permitted for minors by law;
- Encourages students to commit illegal acts or violate school regulations or substantially disrupts the orderly operation of school or school activities;
- Expresses or advocates sexual, racial, or religious harassment or violence or prejudice;
- Is distributed or displayed in violation of time, place, and manner regulations.

Expression in an official school publication or school-sponsored activity is subject to editorial control by the school district over the style and content when the school district's actions are reasonably related to legitimate pedagogical concerns. Official school publications may be distributed at reasonable times and locations.

### Yearbook / Class Composite / Student Memorial

A Senior yearbook picture is to be a picture that is upper body/head photos only. This photo will also be the photo used for the senior composite class photo. Senior yearbook pictures will not be accepted if they contain the following:

- Props such as cars/vehicles/boats/tractors, musical instruments, sports equipment, etc..
- Hats, costumes, or accessories
- Weapons of any kind, including rifles, shotguns, knives, etc..
- Group photos, such as with babies, grandparents, other relatives, or pets

Student Memorial - A memorial page in the MHS yearbook will be available for purchase for students who have passed away, the student must have been a part of the graduating class in order to be a part of the memorial page. The cost of the page will not be paid by the Menahga Public School District. The cost will be determined by the ad cost of the yearbook add pages of the given year.

### Student Records

All permanent student records, e.g. transcripts, health records, IEP's, are on file and available upon request. Parents/guardians, and students are allowed to inspect and review official student records, files and data including all material in the cumulative record. An appointment

must be made through the office by those eligible to examine records. A written request stating the records to be reviewed is required. Students needing any of these documents may secure them by filling out a request form in the office or by calling 564-4141.

### Student Surveys

Occasionally, the school district utilizes surveys to obtain student opinions and information about students.

### Title IX Law

It is the policy of I.S.D. 821 not to discriminate on the basis of sex in its educational program activities or employment policies, as required by Title IX of the 1972 Educational Amendments. Inquiries regarding compliance with Title IX may be directed to: Michelle Koch, Title IX Coordinator-- Menahga Public School (564-4141 ext.)

### Transportation of Public School Students – Expectations on the School Buses

Students who ride the bus to school must ride the bus home unless the office receives a signed note from the parent/guardian or receives a phone call. All calls for transportation changes must be made before 1 p.m. each day to ensure that your child's teacher can be notified.

Riding the bus is a privilege; thus, students are expected to behave in the same manner as in the classroom. While riding, waiting for the bus, or after being dropped off, all riders must comply with the following expectations:

- Get to the bus stop five minutes before your scheduled pickup time. The school bus driver will not wait for late students.
- Respect the property of others while waiting at the bus stop.
- Stay away from the street, road, or highway when waiting for the bus.
- Wait until the bus stops before approaching the bus.
- After getting off the bus, move away from the bus.
- If you must cross the street, always cross in front of the bus where the driver can see you. Wait for the driver to signal to you before crossing the street.
- Follow the driver's directions at all times.
- Remain seated facing forward while the bus is in motion.
- Talk quietly and use appropriate language.
- Keep all parts of your body inside the bus.
- Keep arms, legs, and belongings to yourself and out of the aisle.
- No fighting, harassment, intimidation, or horseplay.
- Do not throw any object.
- No eating, drinking, or use of alcohol, tobacco, or drugs.



- Do not bring any weapons or dangerous objects on the school bus.
- Do not damage the school bus.

### Transportation Consequences for Misbehavior

Behavior problems will be addressed by the driver, with written documentation provided to the principal. The driver, transportation director, and principal will address serious and persistent situations. Offenses that are dangerous or destructive will result in immediate suspension and may include notification of legal authorities. Students damaging school buses are liable for damages. Failure to initiate payment will result in loss of riding privileges until damage is paid for.

Consequences for school bus/bus stop misconduct will apply to all regular and late routes. Decisions regarding a student's ability to ride the bus in connection with co curricular and extracurricular events (for example, field trips or competitions) will be in the sole discretion of the school district. Parents or guardians will be notified of any suspension of bus privileges.

- 1st Offense: warning
- 2nd Offense: 3-5 school-day suspension from riding the bus
- 3rd Offense: 5-10 school-day suspension from riding the bus
- 4th Offense: 10-20 school-day suspension from riding the bus/meeting with parent
- Further offenses – individually considered. Students may be suspended for longer periods of time, including the remainder of the school year.

When any student goes 60 transportation days without a report, the student's consequences may start over at the first offense. Based on the severity of a student's conduct, more serious consequences may be imposed at any time. Depending on the nature of the offense, consequences such as suspension or expulsion from school also may result from school bus/bus stop misconduct.

All district students are provided with bus safety instruction during the first three weeks of school and are required to demonstrate understanding of bus safety lessons. More information is available in policy 709mL-1.

### Extracurricular Transportation

The school district may provide transportation for students to and from extracurricular activities. To the extent the school district provides extracurricular transportation, the district

may charge a fee for transportation of students to and from extracurricular activities and optional field trips at locations other than school.

#### Late Bus

Late buses run at 5:15 p.m. as announced. The late bus is for students who are participating in a sport practice or activity or receiving assistance from a teacher. Any student riding for reasons other than school activities may lose future riding privileges and/or receive detention.

#### Parent Pickup and Drop Off of Students

Parents/Guardians picking up or dropping off their students are directed to do so at the East side of the High School Parking Lot. Morning drop offs and afternoon pick-ups can be made at the main doors in the front of the school; however, this is a very busy area and drivers should not park in this area. Crossing guards are on duty before and after school.

#### Video and Audio Recording

The school district buildings and grounds may be equipped with video cameras. Video surveillance may occur in any school district building or on any school district property. Video footage is for school use only. It's not intended for public, parent/guardian use, due to student/staff data privacy.

#### Visitors in District Buildings

Parents/guardians and community members are welcome to visit the schools. To ensure the safety of those in the school and to avoid disruption to the learning environment, all visitors must report directly to the Office upon entering the building, with the exception of events open to the public. All visitors will be required to provide a picture ID, and to wear a "visitors badge" while in the building during the school day. Visitors must have the approval of the principal before visiting a classroom during instructional time. An individual or group may be denied permission to visit a school or school property, or such permission may be revoked, if the visitor does not comply with school district procedures or if the visit is not in the best interests of the students, employee, or the school district. Anyone violating this policy could be charged with trespassing.

Menahga High School does not permit student visitors at school because of the disruption to the school day.

## PART II – ACADEMICS

### Academic Integrity Policy in College Credit Courses

If students in college credit courses are caught breaching the academic integrity policy, they will immediately be dropped from that course and lose credit from the college and will lose high school credit. A grade of "F" will be placed on the college and high school transcript.

### Academic Lettering

A student may earn a letter for being on the A or B honor roll for 2 (two) consecutive semesters. A only and 9-12 only. 7 and 8th A only...non lettering.

Students, in all grades, are eligible to achieve a Letter if their cumulative G.P.A. meets a certain standard. The standard has been set and adjusted based on the student's academic year in high school. Grades will be calculated at the end of the second semester. Letters will be awarded at the Spring Awards Ceremony.

- Freshman: 3.75 Semester 1 (Fall)
- Sophomore: 3.75 Semester 2 (9th Grade) Semester 1 (10th Grade)
- Junior: 3.7 Semester 2 (10th Grade) Semester 1 (11th Grade)
- Senior: 3.7 Semester 2 (11th Grade) Semester 1 (12th Grade)

### Alternative Educational Opportunities

Some students may be at risk of not completing their educational programs. The school district provides alternative learning options for students who are at risk of not succeeding in school. Alternative educational opportunities may include special tutoring, modified curriculum and instruction, instruction through electronic media, special education services, homebound instruction, and enrollment in an alternative learning center, among others. Students and parents/guardians with questions about these programs should contact the Student Services Office.

### Cheating and Plagiarism

Cheating and plagiarism are prohibited. Students who cheat or commit plagiarism on any test or assignment will be given a failing grade for that test or assignment and will be disciplined in accordance with the school district's "Student Discipline" policy.

### Dual Enrollment

Dual enrollment students include home school, ALC and PSEO students who are also taking courses in our high school. Dual enrollment students should only be in the building during the time of their classes here. They should arrive no more than five minutes before the class and leave immediately after the class. PSEO/Online students' time on campus may be determined on a case-by-case basis, considering the specific requirements of each course and the student's personal schedule. This flexible approach ensures that students can effectively manage their time while meeting the necessary academic obligations.

### Extended School Year Opportunities

The school district provides extended school year opportunities to a student who is the subject of an Individualized Education Program (IEP) if the student's IEP team determines the services are necessary during a break in instruction in order to provide a free and appropriate public education. For more information on extended school year opportunities for students with an IEP, contact your student's IEP case manager.

### Summer School - Credit Recovery

Menahga High School may offer summer school sessions on site for students who need developmental, remedial, or make-up work in basic skills, and academic courses. Summer school is a privilege to students and not a right.

### Failing a Class

Each teacher sets grading criteria and will inform students of that criteria on the first day of the course. If a student drops the course or is removed from the course after two weeks into the grading period, he/she will automatically receive a failing grade for the course. Students that fail a core graduation requirement should contact the academic advisor / principal for options regarding the make-up of that requirement.

### Field Trips

Educational field trips may be taken during the school year under the teacher's direction with administrative approval. Parents may be asked to assist with these field trips. When trips are made in school buses outside of school district boundaries, parents will be notified. Students are required to have written permission from a parent or guardian on the school's field trip permission form prior to going on a field trip. Permission will not be granted over the phone. When students are on field trips, all rules of student conduct and discipline apply. If a parent would prefer that a student not attend a particular field trip, please contact the classroom teacher.

### Grades

Students' grades will be reported twice during the year. Report cards will be available online at the end of each grading period for review. Online grade reports may be reviewed at:

<https://mncloud2.infinitecampus.org/campus/portal/menahga.jsp>

Report cards will be mailed home at the end of each school year for review. The grades on your report card determine your grade point average (GPA). Class rank is calculated based on a student's cumulative GPA.

Students in Grades 9-12 are required to pass all core courses. A student failing a core class must repeat the course and pass before credit is given. Students must pass a core course before they can take the next course in that sequence. In order to receive credit for a class, a

student's final grade must be 60% or higher. Private and Homeschool grades will be transferred in as P / F.

If a letter grade is presented, the district must have a grading scale included with the transcript otherwise it is P/F

A+	97-100	A	93-96	A-	90-92
B+	87-89	B	83-86	B-	80-82
C+	77-79	C	73-76	C-	70-72
D+	67-69	D	63-66	D-	60-62
F	59 and less				

### Graduation Requirements: See School Board Policy #613

Students must meet all course credit requirements and graduation standards, as established by the state and the school board, in order to graduate from Menahga High School.

### Course Credits Required

In order to receive a diploma, students must successfully complete at least 26 (24-25) credits and comply with the following high school level course requirements:

Graduation Requirements: (1 semester = .5 credit)

- Minimum 4 credits in English
- Minimum 4 credits in Social Studies
- Minimum 3 credits in Science
- Minimum 3 credits in Math
- 2 credits in Physical Education & Health (1.5 credits in PE, .50 credit in Health)
- 1 credit in Fine Arts
- 8 credits in Electives
- .5 Personal Finance
- .5 CTE/Pathways Elective
- May earn up to six elective credits completing internship or work skill courses

### Honor Roll

Menahga High School will create an A and a B honor roll at the end of each semester. Eligible students will be placed on the honor roll based on the final grades earned in that semester. A student with a failing grade in any class will not be eligible for the honor roll. Students must be enrolled in at least 4 Menahga High School class periods in order to be listed on the Menahga High School Honor Roll. A - 4.0-3.6 GPA, B – 3.59-3.0 GPA

### Homebound Instruction

Homebound instruction is available for any student who is out of school due to illness (either at home or in the hospital) for an extended period of time. It is a valuable service offered to our

students to ensure they do not fall too far behind their classmates due to an extended illness. Please contact the school office if you have any questions regarding homebound instruction.

### Home Based Instruction

Home-based services arise from decisions made by an IEP team to serve a child in that capacity. A child could be enrolled in a part-day school situation and a part day home-based situation.

Placing Authority: IEP/IFSP team. Not determined by a physician or mental health professional.

Not bound by number of days in attendance or absent.

Home-based services may also be offered as an option to non-disabled students who are suspended or expelled, according to the requirements of the MN Pupil Fair Dismissal Act.

Homebound vs. home-based is an important distinction, as our obligation to provide educational services to the student and corresponding reimbursement rates vary for each of these two areas.

### Homework

Homework assignments are made by the teachers. The amount of homework varies by teacher and subject area. The school district asks for parents/guardians to encourage their child(ren) to complete homework thoroughly and promptly. Typically, students will have two days to make up work they miss due to unexpected absences. The two days to make up work standard, does not apply to work that is received previous to the absences occurring. In the case of expected absences, students need to talk with teachers if extra time is necessary. Teachers determine if late work is accepted, and how much credit will be earned.

### Menahga Area Learning Center

The Menahga Area Learning Center is an opportunity for at-risk students who are 16 and older and enrolled in grades 9-12 to be successful in earning their high school diplomas. The program offers classes Tuesday and Thursday during the school year. Credits are awarded upon successful completion of each class. Students will earn a Menahga High School diploma or that of their home school district when all credit requirements are completed. Students who are full time at the high school and need to make up required classes may attend the ALC after school program or summer sessions to earn necessary credits. Students must have an ALC referral from a High School Principal.

### Progress Reports

Progress reports are issued midway through each semester. The mid-term grades are posted electronically through Infinite Campus only. Semester reports will be mailed home. Teachers at various times on an as-needed basis may send out progress reports, both positive and negative.

### Promotion and Retention

All students are expected to achieve an acceptable level of proficiency. Students who achieve at an acceptable level will be promoted to the next grade level at the completion of the school year. Retention of a student may be considered when professional staff and parents/guardians feel that it is in the best interest of the student. The superintendent's decision will be final. The district has a variety of services to help students succeed in school.

### Post-Secondary Enrollment Options

Tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grade students may apply to enroll in Post-Secondary Enrollment Options (PSEO) and other advanced enrichment programs. General information about the PSEO program will be provided to all eighth, ninth, tenth, and eleventh grade students by March 1. Qualifying credits granted to a student through a PSEO course or program that meets or exceeds a graduation standard or requirement will be counted toward the graduation and credit requirements of the state academic standards. Interested students must fill out an application form and submit it to the Student Services Office by May 30 for enrollment the following school year. The application form must be signed by the student and his/her parent or guardian. Students wishing to take a PSEO course should contact the Student Services Office for more information.

### State Test Requirements

Minnesota state law requires that all 9<sup>th</sup> graders take science, 10<sup>th</sup> graders take reading, 11<sup>th</sup> graders take the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA) III in the spring unless exempt in an Individual Education Plan. These scores are used to determine whether a school is making adequate yearly performance goals under federal legislation. MCA III scores will be sent home to all parents/guardians when received back from the Minnesota Department of Education.

### Support Services (504)

The Menahga Public School District does not discriminate against any student on the basis of his or her disability and allows equal access to and participation in its programs and activities. The District also does not discriminate against anyone because he or she is associated with someone who is disabled. In addition, it is the District's responsibility to identify and evaluate students who, within the intent of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, need specially designed instructional or physical accommodations so those students may receive free

appropriate public education. For this policy, a student who may be eligible within the intent of Section 504 is one who:

- Is eligible to attend the District's schools under federal and Minnesota law: and
- Has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, including learning.

Students may be eligible for services under the provisions of Section 504 even though they do not require services pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Students who are identified as individuals with exceptional needs under IDEA criteria will have their rights and obligations determined by that law. Inquiries regarding compliance with Section 504 may be directed to the district 504 Coordinator: Mike Schmidt. Menahga Public School 218-564-4141.

### Test-Out Policy and Procedures

Minnesota Academic Standards provides an opportunity for students to demonstrate mastery of subject material and earn course credit. A student who has gained conceptual knowledge and skills necessary to pass a course may elect to earn credit for the course by successfully completing the test out procedure for the course. Application for test-out must be made to the principal or academic advisor by May 15<sup>th</sup> for the first semester and November 15<sup>th</sup> for second semester. Parent signature must accompany the application. A student may attempt to test-out of any given course only once. If the student fails any portion of the exam, they must enroll in and pass the course to receive credit in that course. The test-out will consist of a written exam, but may include lab work, presentations, problem solving, and submission of portfolios, performance and/or demonstrations. Tests and answer keys will be secured in the office. Tests will not be returned to the student. The criteria used to determine whether or not the student passes the exam (and, thus, the course) will be the same as would be used to determine whether or not a student would pass the course if they were enrolled in it. Criteria for passing the comprehensive exam must not be more stringent than the criteria for passing a course. Exams must be passed with a 70% to establish credit. Students will earn a grade based on the district adopted grading scale.

## PART III – RULES AND DISCIPLINE

### Attendance

Minnesota Statute 120A.22 requires every student between the ages of seven and sixteen receive an education. Students are required to attend all assigned classes every day that school is in session or have a valid excuse for absence.



### Student Absences

*Parents/guardians should notify the school by 8:30 AM if a student is going to be absent. Any absences unreported by parents/guardians will be marked as unexcused.* The student has the right and obligation to make up any work missed for full credit. Arrangements are to be made to make up work in advance when students know they will be gone for several days. Administration will determine the legitimacy of all absences.

### Absences During the School Day

Students must bring a note stating a specific reason from your parent or guardian to the office on the morning of the day that you need to leave. An out-of-the-building pass will be ready to be picked up in the office after period 1. Before leaving school, students should sign out in the office AND SIGN IN AT THE OFFICE UPON RETURN. If you leave the building without an out-of-the-building pass, you will be considered truant unless you have CLEARED YOUR LEAVING WITH A PRINCIPAL.

### Classification of Absences

Excused absences ALL ABSENCES WILL BE COUNTED in the accumulation of the maximum number 12 per school year, except for school authorized absences. Excused absences need to be verified by parent or guardian at the time of the absence and are counted in the maximum absences rule. For excused absences, a student will be allowed two school days for each day absent to complete assignments. Arrangements need to be made with the teachers.

- Illness or medical/dental appointment not verified by a doctor
- Serious illness in the student's immediate family
- Needed at home up to 3 days per year. at the discretion of the principal.
- Religious instruction not to exceed 3 hours per week
- Family Trip
- Two days per year for personal trips to schools or colleges (not verified)

School Authorized Absences – these need to be verified at the time of the absence and are not counted in the 12-day maximum rule. Make up work is required.

- All school approved absences through the principal's office. Examples would be pre-approved, school related events, or court appearances.
- Official religious holidays
- Illness or medical appointment verified by doctor/dentist
- Death in immediate family, i.e., grandparents, brothers, sisters, parents (significant extended family members at the discretion of the principal)
- Suspensions
- Two days per year for personal trips to schools or colleges (verified, pre approval needed)
- Any absence which the student is excused in writing by an administrator or faculty member.

Unexcused absences are all absences beyond the maximum 12 per year that do not meet the criteria of a school authorized absence or absences that are unreported by parents/guardians. Students with 7 or more unexcused periods will be reported as truant. Daily participation grade based on attendance may be part of courses offered. Students will lose all participation if absence is unexcused.

#### Late Arrival

Being late to school will be treated differently than other tardiness. If you are late to school you must check into the office to sign in and pick up a pass. Missing the bus and oversleeping are not excused reasons for being late to school.

#### Tardiness

*Tardies* are issued when a student is not in the classroom when the bell rings. Students with an unexcused tardy for more than five minutes will be considered absent for the period. Students with a valid excuse for being tardy must obtain a pass from the staff member who has detained the student. Students who present a pass to their teacher will not be considered tardy. If students are having locker problems, need to see the nurse, or need to use the restroom, they must go to class and see the teacher first to avoid a tardy. Three unexcused tardies are equivalent to one unexcused absence.

#### Truancy

A student absent without the consent of the parent/guardian is truant. This is an unexcused absence and the student will be subject to the district attendance policy. After three (3) unexcused absences, a letter will be sent to parents/guardians. Under Minnesota law, students with seven (7) or more unexcused absences qualify as truant and parents/guardians are required to meet to develop a Truancy Plan as a final attempt to compel the student to attend school. If the Truancy Plan is not followed and the student continues to have unexcused absences, the matter will be referred to the County Attorney's Office.

#### Bullying Prohibition:

##### See School Board Policy #514

The school district is committed to providing a safe and respectful learning environment for all students. Acts of bullying, in any form, by either an individual student or a group of students, is prohibited on school district property, at school-related functions, and by misuse of technology. For detailed information regarding the school district's "Bullying Prohibition" policy, go to:

[www.menahga.k12.mn.us](http://www.menahga.k12.mn.us)

##### Definition of Bullying

1. Bullying is intimidating, threatening, abusive or hurtful conduct

2. It is objectively offensive and
3. The conduct involved an imbalance of power and is repeated or
4. The conduct materially and substantially interferes with a student's education or ability to participate in school activities.

#### Cell Phones and Other Electronic Communication Devices

Cell phones (including watches that are capable of calling or texting) and other devices are allowed for 9-12th grade students before school, prior to 8:15, between classes, lunchtime, and after the 3:08 bell. For our 7th and 8th grade students, cell phones may only be used before and after school. Cell phones are not allowed during class time or after the tardy bell rings.

Teachers may request cell phones to be collected at the beginning of class (basket). If a cell phone is seen or heard during class time, it will be confiscated and turned into the office.

Parents are asked to cooperate with the school in this matter and not text or call their child during class time. If a student needs to make a call in an emergency, they need to report to the office to request permission.

The school principal has the right to regulate electronic device usage. Menahga High School prohibits any member of the school to use electronic devices (including cell phones) to take a picture of a staff member or student for the purpose of displaying it on the internet or in any other public place without the permission of the person photographed. If students take pictures with cell phones or technology, students may be subject to discipline which can include suspension or expulsion. This is a confidentiality issue.

#### Electronic Device Violations:

- First Offense: The cell phone will be taken away and returned at the end of the day.
- Second Offense: The cell phone will be taken away, and a parent or guardian must pick it up from the school office.
- Third Offense: The student's cell phone will be turned in to the high school office to be locked up daily for the rest of the semester.
- Subsequent offenses will be dealt with by the administration.

Unique Circumstances: Because it is not possible to list every violation that occurs, those not specified will be responded to as necessary by staff on a case-by- case basis. Unique or special circumstances may call for an adjustment in the discipline policies to meet the school's needs.

#### Disciplinary Consequences

See School Board Policy #506

All disciplinary action is subject to the discretion of the administration. Below are general guidelines that provide a range of penalties, which may vary depending on the situation. Every attempt will be made to maintain consistency in the consequences administered to students for unacceptable behavior on school property and at school sponsored events. Severe offenses at each level may be subject to the strictest disciplinary action at each level, at the discretion of the principal.

Out of School Suspension: Grounds and procedures for suspension will be determined by the principal and will be conducted in accordance with The Minnesota Pupil Fair Dismissal Act (M.S. 127.26-M.S.127.39). The district shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parents of the suspension by telephone as soon as possible following suspension. In the event a student is suspended without an informal administrative conference on the grounds that the student will create an immediate and substantial danger to surrounding persons or property, the written notice shall be served upon the student and the student's parent/guardian within 48 hours of the suspension. Written notice will include grounds for suspension, a brief statement of the facts, a description of the testimony, a readmission plan and a copy of the Minnesota Pupil Fair Dismissal Act (M.S. 127.26-M.S.127.39). Service by mail is complete upon mailing.

Suspension Pending Expulsion or Exclusion: Notwithstanding the provisions of subdivisions 1 and 3, the pupil may be suspended pending the school board's decision in the expulsion or exclusion hearing; provided that alternative educational services are implemented to the extent that suspension exceeds five days. The principal will assemble an appeals board if he/she deems necessary. Students who are concerned about a specific disciplinary action or student conduct violation may consult with their parents/guardians, teachers, and/or student support service staff to informally resolve the concern. If the concern cannot be resolved using these informal channels, one may appeal concerns through the channels listed in the appeals process shown below.

Principal....Superintendent or Designee... Board of Education.

Classroom Detention: Teachers reserve the right to require students to attend a classroom detention for inappropriate behavior. The teacher will establish the date and time based on the type of inappropriate behavior displayed by the student.

LEVEL ONE OFFENSES:

Academic Dishonesty: The immediate consequence for academic dishonesty is a zero; or based on the judgment of the teacher, may be a retake of the assignment or test with a percentage penalty assessed. Repeated violations of this policy can result in failure in the course.

**Insubordination, Disruptive or Disrespectful Behavior, Skipping Class, Forgery:**

- 1st Offense: Detention
- 2nd Offense: Detention, up to three (3) consecutive times, conference with parent
- 3rd Offense: One day In School Suspension, Behavior plan

**Inappropriate Public Displays of Affection:**

- 1st Offense: Verbal warning.
- 2nd Offense: Verbal warning with a parent contact for both parties involved
- Any Subsequent Offenses: Detention and Behavior Plan.

**Inappropriate Dress and/or Behavior at Activities where Menahga is a Participant**

- 1st Offense: warning
- 2nd Offense: Two (2) week suspension from Menahga activities.
- Any serious behavior resulting in a removal from a middle school activity will result in a two (2) week suspension from Menahga school activities.

**Computer/Ipad Misuse:**

- 1st Offense: Loss of device or login for a minimum of one (1) week.
- 2nd Offense: Loss of device or login for a minimum of one (1) semester.
- 3rd Offense: Loss of device or login for remainder of the school year.

**LEVEL TWO OFFENSES:**

**Inappropriate Language Directed at a Staff Member:** one (1) day suspension from school.

**Tobacco Products**

Possessing or using tobacco, tobacco products tobacco-related devices, or electronic cigarettes in district buildings, on district grounds, in district vehicles or at district events.

- 1st Offense: One (1) day in or out-of-school suspension. A member of the Menahga Police Department will charge the student with possession of tobacco.
- 2nd Offense, student will be charged with possession of tobacco. The student will be referred to the Citizens Concerned for Youth Program.(CCY)
- 3rd Offense: Three (3) day in or out-of-school suspension, student will be charged with possession of tobacco, during this time we will explore expulsion or alternative placement

**Verbal Harassment or Threats (Student-to-Student Harassment/Bullying)**

Threatening or harassing, directly or indirectly, with the intent of terrorizing or causing emotional distress to another person.

- 1st Offense: One (1) day in or out-of-school suspension with a written report filed.
- 2nd Offense: : Two (2) day in or out-of-school suspension.
- 3rd Offense: Four (4) day suspension; during this time we will explore expulsion or alternative placement.

Fighting, Instigating a Fight, Vandalism, Theft

- 1st Offense: One (1) day in or out-of-school suspension
- 2nd Offense: Two (2) day in or out-of-school suspension
- 3rd Offense: Four (4) day suspension; during this time we will explore alternative placement.

Self-Defense/Retaliation: Any self-defense or retaliation will be dealt with by the violence policy. Students are encouraged to remove themselves from the situation as quickly as possible and get help from a staff member.

LEVEL THREE OFFENSES

Alcohol or Chemicals, Possession, Use or Under the Influence: Using or being under the influence of any narcotic or controlled substance where possession or use is prohibited by Minnesota or federal law.

- 1st Offense: Five (5) day suspension. The student will be referred to the Citizens Concerned for Youth Program.(CCY) A member of the Menahga Police Department may charge the student with possession of an illegal substance.
- 2nd Offense: Five (5) day suspension; during this time we will explore expulsion or alternative placement. A member of the Menahga Police Department may charge the student with possession of an illegal substance.

Racial, Religious, Sexual Harassment and Violence, Hazing: Participating in or conspiring with others to engage in acts that injure, degrade, intimidate or disgrace other individuals, including indecent exposure, and words or actions that negatively impact an individual or group based on their race, cultural or religious background, their sex or any disabilities they may have. The school district will act to investigate all complaints, either formal or informal, verbal or written. The school district will discipline any student or employee who violates this policy. Students are requested to complete a “Harassment Complaint Form” to provide documentation of any racial, religious or sexual harassment. These forms are available from the Administration. See policy 413m for more information

- 1st Offense: One (1) day suspension with a written report filed.
- 2nd Offense: Three (3) day suspension with a written report filed.

- 3rd Offense: Five (5) day suspension; during this time we will explore expulsion or alternative placement.

Violence (Physical or Aggravated Assault): Acting with intent to cause fear in another person or immediate bodily harm, or intentionally inflicting or attempting to inflict bodily harm upon another person.

- 1st Offense: Five (5) day suspension
- 2nd Offense: Five (5) day suspension; during this time we will explore expulsion or alternative placement.

LEVEL FOUR OFFENSES:

Chemicals, Possession With Intent to Distribute or Sell Participating in the selling or distributing, or intending to sell or distribute, any narcotic or controlled substance where sale or distribution is prohibited by Minnesota or federal law.

- 1st Offense: Expulsion

Dress and Appearance

See School Board Policy #504

Students are EXPECTED to be dressed appropriately for school activities and in keeping with community standards.

Appropriate clothing includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Clothing appropriate for the weather.
- Clothing that does not create a health or safety hazard.
- Clothing appropriate for the activity (e.g., physical education or the classroom).

Inappropriate clothing includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- "Short shorts," skimpy tank tops, tops that expose the midriff, and other clothing that is not in keeping with community standards.
- Clothing bearing a message that is lewd, vulgar, or obscene.
- Apparel promoting products or activities that are illegal for use by minors.
- Objects such as chains longer than 6 inches in length or made of heavier material than jewelry quality chains, studded jewelry such as bracelets, rings, etc., that could cause injury or damage to the wearer, other individuals or property.
- Objectionable emblems, badges, symbols, signs, words, objects, or pictures on clothing or jewelry communicating a message that is racist, sexist, or otherwise derogatory to a protected minority group, evidences gang membership or affiliation, or approves, advances, or provokes any form of religious, racial, or sexual harassment and/or violence against other individuals as defined in school district policy.

The intention of this policy is not to abridge the rights of students to express political, religious, philosophical, or similar opinions by wearing apparel on which such messages are stated. Such messages are acceptable as long as they are not lewd, vulgar, obscene, defamatory, profane, or do not advocate violence or harassment against others.

- Any apparel or footwear that would damage school property.
- Hats (baseball and winter caps) are allowed to be worn in the building, provided they represent "Menahga affiliated spirit wear" and do not cover the ears. (A Menahga Braves logo or Cooperative Agreement, Board Approved Activities Programs). Administration does have the ability to approve other headgear if needed (example: medical related situations).
- Hoods are not to be worn, as they minimize staff's ability to identify students when needed. Hoods are a safety concern.
  - Hats/hoods are not to be worn in the building except with the approval of the building principal (e.g., student undergoing chemotherapy, medical situations).

If the administration believes a student's appearance, grooming, or mode of dress interferes with or disrupts the educational process or school activities or poses a threat to the health or safety of the student or others, the student will be directed to make modifications, offered an alternative to wear or will be sent home for the day. A parent or guardian will be notified.

#### Drug-Free School and Workplace

The possession and use of alcohol, controlled substances, and toxic substances are prohibited at school or in any other school location before, during, or after school hours. Paraphernalia associated with controlled substances also is prohibited. The school district will discipline or take appropriate action against anyone who violates this policy.

District policy is not violated when a person brings a controlled substance which has a currently accepted medical treatment use onto a school location for personal use if the person has a physician's prescription for the substance. Students who have prescriptions must comply with the school district's "Student Medication" policy. The school district will provide an instructional program in every elementary and secondary school on chemical abuse and the prevention of chemical dependency.

#### Hall Passes

Students are not permitted in the halls while class is in session unless a teacher accompanies them or they have a hall pass from a staff member.

#### Harassment and Violence Prohibition

The school district strives to maintain a learning and working environment that is free from harassment and violence on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, familial status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, or



disability. The school district prohibits any form of harassment or violence on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, familial status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, or disability.

### Hazing Prohibition

Hazing is prohibited. No student will plan, direct, encourage, aid, or engage in hazing. Hazing means doing something or making another student do something that creates a risk of harm to a student in order for the student to be initiated into or affiliated with a student organization. "Hazing" is a violation of school policy regardless of time or place it occurs.

No student, teacher, administrator, volunteer, contractor or other employee of the school district shall plan, direct, encourage, aid or engage in hazing. The school district will act to investigate all complaints of hazing and will discipline or take appropriate action against anyone found to have violated this policy. Hazing has been officially condemned by the Menahga Public Schools. Any attempt to carry it out before, during, or after school, on or off school property, will be considered a serious harassment issue. Criminal and school consequences will be enforced.

### Internet Acceptable Use: See School Board Policy #524

Menahga School District offers internet access for student classroom activities and career development. The district has the right to place restrictions on the material accessed and has installed software that is designed to prevent students from accessing inappropriate or unacceptable websites. The following rules exist to ensure that student use of the computer network is in compliance with the school district's policy for Acceptable Use of Technology:

- All students are expected to follow copyright laws that provide legal protection to the author or creator of information
- Student use of the devices and computer network is only allowed when supervised by a staff member
- Always ask permission before using a device
- Accessing files and/or documents of others is prohibited
- Attempting to log on to a device or e-mail system by "cracking a password" is prohibited. Assisting others in violating this rule by sharing information or passwords is also unacceptable.
- Improper use of the computer network is prohibited. This includes games, accessing inappropriate information, selling or buying any products, political lobbying, using threatening or obscene language, and any type of illegal activities. If there is a question

about the appropriateness of a computer activity, a teacher's permission should be obtained.

- Use of personal e-mail, social media sites and the exchange of any personal contact information is prohibited

Violations of this policy will, in most cases, result in the loss of computer and network privileges. School disciplinary action, as well as other possible consequences, including referral to law enforcement agencies, may be imposed.

### Posters

Students who wish to publicize activities must receive prior approval from the principal's office to hang posters or flyers on appropriate spaces in the school.

### Public Displays of Affection

Students are requested to refrain from excessive or intimate physical body contact. If a warning is not heeded, parents will be informed and if the behavior continues, a parent conference may be required.

### Tobacco-Free Schools See Policy...

School district students and staff have the right to learn and work in an environment that is tobacco free. School policy is violated by any individual's use of tobacco, tobacco-related devices, or electronic cigarettes in a public school, on school grounds, in any school-owned vehicles, or at any school events or activities. Students may not possess any type of tobacco, tobacco-related device, or electronic cigarette in a public school, on school grounds, in any school-owned vehicles, or at any school events or activities. Any student who violates this policy is subject to school district discipline. Contact a principal if you have questions or wish to report violations. For detailed information on the school district's "Tobacco-Free Environment" policy, go to: [www.menahga.k12.mn.us](http://www.menahga.k12.mn.us)

### Vandalism

Vandalism of any district property is prohibited. Violators will be disciplined and may be reported to law enforcement officials.

### Weapons Prohibition

No person will possess, use, or distribute a weapon when in a school location except as provided in school district policy. A "weapon" means any object, device, or instrument designed as a weapon or through its use is capable of threatening or producing bodily harm or which may be used to inflict self-injury including, but not limited to, any firearm, whether loaded or unloaded; airguns; pellet guns; BB guns; all knives; blades; clubs; metal knuckles; nunchucks;

throwing stars; explosives; fireworks; mace and other propellants; stun guns; ammunition; poisons; chains; arrows; and objects that have been modified to serve as a weapon. A weapon also includes look-alike weapons. Appropriate discipline and action will be taken against any person who violates this policy. The school district does not permit the possession, use, or distribution of weapons by students. Discipline of students will include, at a minimum: immediate out-of-school suspension; confiscation of the weapon; immediate notification of police; parent or guardian notification; and recommendation to the superintendent of dismissal for a period of time not to exceed one year. A student who brings a firearm to school will be expelled for at least one year, subject to school district discretion on a case-by-case basis. For a copy of the "School Weapons" policy, contact a principal or access it at:

[www.menahga.k12.mn.us](http://www.menahga.k12.mn.us)

#### **PART IV – HEALTH AND SAFETY**

##### **Accidents**

All student injuries that occur at school or school-sponsored activities should be reported to the building principal. Parents/guardians of an injured student will be notified as soon as possible. If the student requires immediate medical attention, the principal or other district leader will call 911 or seek emergency medical treatment and then contact the parent(s).

##### **Communicable Diseases**

To protect other students from contagious illnesses, students infected with certain diseases are not allowed to come to school while contagious. If a parent suspects that his/her child has a communicable or contagious disease, the parent should contact the school nurse or principal so that other students who might have been exposed to the disease can be alerted.

Students with certain communicable diseases will not be excluded from attending school in their usual daily attendance settings as long as their health permits and their attendance does not create a significant risk of transmitting the illness to other students or school district employees. The school district will determine on a case-by-case basis whether a contagious student's attendance creates a significant risk of transmitting the illness to others.

##### **Emergency Contact Information**

Parents should make sure emergency contact information is correct and up-to-date each year. This can be done by contacting the high school office.

##### **First Aid**

The nurse's office is equipped to handle minor injuries requiring first aid. If the nurse's office is not open, assistance can be sought from the building's administrative office. If a student experiences a more serious medical emergency at school, 911 will be called and/or a parent/guardian will be contacted depending on the situation.

The district has installed automated external defibrillators (AEDs) outside the elementary office, outside the cafenadium, outside the middle school office, in the high school gym and top of the east stairwell. Tampering with any AED is prohibited and may result in discipline.

### Health Services

A nurse is present in the school health office throughout the day. If you find it necessary to go to the health office, you must first get permission from your teacher. If it becomes necessary for you to go home, the nurse will call home for you. Students should not call or text home. This will minimize calls and confusion. The nurse is not a doctor. Do not expect her to perform the same services that you would obtain from a doctor at the clinic.

A parent/guardian should notify the school if his/her child is unable to attend school because of illness. To report your child's absence, please call (218) 564-4141 ext.

### Health Screening

The school conducts periodic screenings including vision, hearing. These are only screenings and if indicated, should be followed by medical examination for diagnosis. A parent has the right to determine if their child will participate. Please notify the office in writing in September if you would like your child exempt.

### Immunizations

All students must be properly immunized or submit appropriate documentation exempting them from such immunizations in order to enroll or remain enrolled. Students may be exempted from the immunization requirement when the immunization of the student is contraindicated for medical reasons; laboratory confirmation of adequate immunity exists; or due to the conscientiously held beliefs of the parents/guardians or student. The school district will maintain a file containing the immunization records for each student in attendance at the school district for at least five years after the student reaches the age of 18. For a copy of the immunization schedule or to obtain an exemption form or information, contact the student health office at (218) 564-4141.

### Medications at School During the School Day

The school district acknowledges that some students may require prescribed drugs or medication during the school day. The administration of prescription medication or drugs at school requires a completed signed request from the student's parent. An "Administering Prescription Medications" form must be completed once a year and/or when a change in the prescription or requirements for administration occurs. Prescription medications must be brought to school in the original container labeled for the student by a pharmacist, and must be administered in a manner consistent with the instructions on the label. Prescription medications are not to be carried by the student but will be left with the appropriate school

personnel. Exceptions that may be allowed include: prescription asthma medications administered with an inhaler pursuant to school district policy and procedures, medications administered as noted in a written agreement between the school district and parent or as specified in an Individualized Education Program (IEP), a plan developed under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (§504 Plan), or an individual health plan (IHP). The school district is to be notified of any change in a student's prescription medication administration.

Students may have over-the-counter medications, such as Tylenol or Ibuprofen, in their lockers with a parent signed note on file with the school nurse. Parents must provide any nonprescription medication the child is to receive, and the medication is to be in the original container. The Health Office does not provide Tylenol, Motrin, Tums, Cough Drops, etc. for students. The Health Office does not provide feminine products.

This information will help parents/guardians make informed decisions that benefit their children, schools, and communities.

**Why statewide testing?**

Minnesota values its educational system and the professionalism of its educators. Minnesota educators created the academic standards which are rigorous and prepare our students for career and college.

The statewide assessments are how we as a state measure that curriculum and daily instruction in our schools are being aligned to the academics standards, ensuring all students are being provided an equitable education. Statewide assessment results are just one tool to monitor that we are providing our students with the education that will ensure a strong workforce and knowledgeable citizens.

**Why does participation matter?**

A statewide assessment is just one measure of your student’s achievement, but your student’s participation is important to understand how effectively the education at your student’s school is aligned to the academic standards.

- In Minnesota’s implementation of the federal Every Student Succeeds Act, a student not participating in the statewide assessments will not receive an individual score and for the purpose of school and district accountability calculations, including opportunities for support and recognition, will not be considered “proficient.”
- Students who receive a college-ready score on the high school MCA are not required to take a remedial, noncredit course at a Minnesota State college or university in the corresponding subject area, potentially saving the student time and money.
- Educators and policy makers use information from assessments to make decisions about resources and support provided.
- Parents and the general public use assessment information to compare schools and make decisions about where to purchase a home or to enroll their children.
- School performance results that are publicly released and used by families and communities, are negatively impacted if students do not participate in assessments.
- English learners not taking ACCESS or Alternate ACCESS for ELLs will not receive a score to meet English learner program exiting criteria.

**Academic Standards and Assessments**

**What are academic standards?**

The [Minnesota K–12 Academic Standards](#) are the statewide expectations for student academic achievement. They identify the knowledge and skills that all students must achieve in a content area and are organized by grade level. School districts determine how students will meet the standards by developing courses and curriculum aligned to the academic standards.

**What is the relationship between academic statewide assessments and the academic standards?**

The statewide assessments in mathematics, reading, and science are used to measure whether students, and their school and district, are meeting the academic standards. Statewide assessments are one measure of how well students are doing on the content that is part of their daily instruction. It is also a measure of how well schools and districts are doing in aligning their curriculum and teaching the standards.

<p><b>Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA) and Minnesota Test of Academic Skills (MTAS)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Based on the Minnesota Academic Standards; given annually in grades 3–8 and high school in reading and mathematics; given annually in grades 5, 8, and high school for science.</li> <li>• Majority of students take the MCA.</li> <li>• MTAS is an option for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities.</li> </ul>	<p><b>ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS for English Learners</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Based on the WIDA English Language Development Standards.</li> <li>• Given annually to English learners in grades K–12 in reading, writing, listening, and speaking.</li> <li>• Majority of English learners take ACCESS for ELLs.</li> <li>• Alternate ACCESS for ELLs is an option for English learners with the most significant cognitive disabilities.</li> </ul>
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#### Why are these assessments effective?

Minnesota believes that in order to effectively measure what students are learning, testing needs to be more than answering multiple choice questions.

- To answer questions, students may need to type in answers, drag and drop images and words, or manipulate a graph or information.
- The Reading and Mathematics MCA are adaptive, which means the answers a student provides determine the next questions the student will answer.
- The Science MCA incorporates simulations, which require students to perform experiments in order to answer questions.

All of these provide students the opportunity to apply critical thinking needed for success in college and careers and show what they know and can do.

#### Are there limits on local testing?

As stated in Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.301, for students in grades 1–6, the cumulative total amount of time spent taking locally adopted districtwide or schoolwide assessments must not exceed 10 hours per school year. For students in grades 7–12, the cumulative total amount of time spent taking locally adopted districtwide or schoolwide assessments must not exceed 11 hours per school year. These limits do not include statewide testing.

In an effort to encourage transparency, the statute also requires a district or charter school, before the first day of each school year, to publish on its website a comprehensive calendar of standardized tests to be administered in the district or charter school during that school year. The calendar must provide the rationale for administering each assessment and indicate whether the assessment is a local option or required by state or federal law.

#### What if I choose not to have my student participate?

Parents/guardians have a right to not have their student participate in state-required standardized assessments. Minnesota Statutes require the department to provide information about statewide assessments to parents/guardians and include a form to complete if they refuse to have their student participate. This form follows on the next page and includes an area to note the reason for the refusal to participate. Your student's district may require additional information.

A school or district may have additional consequences beyond those mentioned in this document for a student not participating in the state-required standardized assessments. There may also be consequences for not participating in assessments selected and administered at the local level. Please contact your school for more information regarding local decisions.

#### When do students take the assessments?

Each school sets their testing schedule within the state testing window. Contact your student's school for information on specific testing days.

- The MCA and MTAS testing window begins in March and ends in May.
- The ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS for ELLs testing window begins at the end of January and ends in March.

#### When do I receive my student's results?

Each summer, individual student reports are sent to school districts and are provided to families no later than fall conferences. The reports can be used to see your child's progress and help guide future instruction.

#### How much time is spent on testing?

Statewide assessments are taken one time each year; the majority of students test online. On average, the amount of time spent taking statewide assessments is **less than 1 percent of instructional time** in a school year. The assessments are not timed and students can continue working as long as they need.

#### Why does it seem like my student is taking more tests?

The statewide required tests are limited to those outlined in this document. Many districts make local decisions to administer additional tests that the state does not require. Contact your district for more information.

#### Where do I get more information?

Students and families can find out more on our [Statewide Testing page](#) ([education.mn.gov](http://education.mn.gov) > Students and Families > Programs and Initiatives > Statewide Testing).

## NOTES

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Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.31, subdivision 4a, requires the commissioner to create and publish a form for parents and guardians to complete if they refuse to have their student participate in state-required standardized assessments. Your student's district may require additional information. School districts must post this three-page form on the district website and include it in district student handbooks.

**Parent/Guardian Refusal for Student Participation in Statewide Assessments**

To opt out of statewide assessments, the parent/guardian must complete this form and return it to the student's school.

To best support school district planning, please submit this form to the student's school no later than January 15 of the academic school year. For students who enroll after a statewide testing window begins, please submit the form within two weeks of enrollment. A new refusal form is required **each year** parents/guardians wish to opt the student out of statewide assessments.

Date \_\_\_\_\_ (This form is **only** applicable for the 20\_\_\_\_ to 20\_\_\_\_ school year.)

Student's Legal First Name \_\_\_\_\_ Student's Legal Middle Initial \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Legal Last Name \_\_\_\_\_ Student's Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

Student's District/School \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

**Please initial to indicate you have received and reviewed information about statewide testing.**

\_\_\_\_ I received information on statewide assessments and choose to opt my student out. MDE provides the *Parent/Guardian Guide and Refusal for Student Participation in Statewide Testing* on the [MDE website](http://mde.mn.gov) ([education.mn.gov](http://education.mn.gov) > Students and Families > Programs and Initiatives > Statewide Testing).

Reason for refusal:

Please indicate the statewide assessment(s) you are opting the student out of this school year:

- MCA/MTAS Reading       MCA/MTAS Science  
 MCA/MTAS Mathematics       ACCESS/Alternate ACCESS for ELLs

Contact your school or district for the form to opt out of local assessments.

I understand that by signing this form, my school and I may lose valuable information about how well my student is progressing academically. As a result, my student will not receive an individual score. Refusing to participate in statewide assessments may impact the school, district, and state's efforts to equitably distribute resources and support student learning; for the purpose of school and district accountability calculations, my student will not be considered "proficient."

If my student is in high school, I understand that by signing this form my student will not have an MCA score that could potentially save time and money by not having to take remedial, non-credit courses at a Minnesota State college or university.

Parent/Guardian Name (print) \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_

To be completed by school or district staff only. Student ID or MARSS Number \_\_\_\_\_

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